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# IRAN HOSTAGES SHOW TRIAL IN TEHERAN?

By ROBERT MOSS

THE cool-headed men among Ayatollah Khomeini's advisers understand that the intelligent way to wind up the American Embassy affair is to present the hostages as witnesses in televised hearings into the supposed "crimes" of the United States in Iran—and then free them.

It was the ruthlessly ambitious Foreign Minister and State Broadcasting czar, Sadegh Ghotbzadeh (whose links with the PLO and the Russians have been documented in this column), who first touted this scheme. It would have the merit of exposing the Americans to further public humiliation while possibly removing their pretext for punitive military action.

It would also appeal, as a senior Washington analyst complains, to the "down-with-my-country-right-or-wrong" lobby to which Senator Kennedy addressed himself in his infelicitous remarks about America and the Shah.

A variation on the scheme would be to segregate, for separate trial and (as a foregone conclusion) imprisonment, the alleged CIA staff among the Embassy hostages.

French consuls tried Poland's secret police, the UB, arrested a series of French consular officials in Szczecin and Wrocław, claiming that they were members of S.D.E.C.E., the French secret service, and engaged in plotting against the régime.

After the French diplomats had been kept in a maximum-security jail for a few months, the UB judged that they were ready to be presented for a show trial, in which they all confessed to various crimes.

The French consul in Szczecin, André Robineau, said: "I hope to receive the punishment I deserve." The UB, like the KGB, has ways of ensuring that its victims keep to the prepared text.

The allegations that were made in the course of the show trials in Warsaw were deeply embarrassing to the French Government, especially since some Paris newspapers—instead of dismissing the charges as the fruits of UB intimidation—turned the affair into a witch hunt against the S.D.E.C.E. Some of the arrested French diplomats received 12-year jail sentences.

This is the part of the story that Mr Ghotbzadeh may have studied. The part President Carter might have found it useful to consider was the finale. The French Government responded to the Polish action by arresting a comparable number of Polish consular officials. After the show trials an exchange of prisoners was finally agreed. The Americans have denied themselves that kind of bargaining counter.

**Rival factions**  
But whether the various interests that are competing for power within the Iranian régime will be able to reach a consensus on how to resolve the hostage question in the near future remains doubtful. The hostages have great symbolic value to all the rival factions now trying to outbid each other in ultra-Islamic fervour.

Even Ghotbzadeh, never noted for his Moslem piety before the revolution, is said to be playing this game so assiduously that he refuses mustard with his meat on the grounds that it is "made with wine."

The CIA and other Western intelligence services have been trying to identify the somewhat hazy group of so-called "students" who seized the American Embassy. It has now been learned that the "students" have an organising committee called the Shora—the literal translation into Farsi of the Russian word "soviet"—and may supply some clue to the motivation of its members.

Under the control of the Shora are six sub-committees, the most important of which handle security and foreign relations and are said to in-

clude Khomeini's own man, the young Ayatollah Khomeini, in constant attendance, but whether he has full control of the situation is another matter. Khomeini, isolated from the government in the holy city of Qom—and the twice-weekly meetings in Teheran of the Revolutionary Council—is finding that his writ no longer runs in many parts of the country.

Full-scale revolts are under way in Kurdistan, Azerbaijan and Iranian Baluchistan, while Khomeini's own supporters engage in savage fighting as the elections scheduled for Jan. 25 approach.

It is therefore uncertain whether the show trials of the hostages will go ahead. What is certain is that, at a time when American—as well as world—opinion is outraged by the Soviet intervention in neighbouring Afghanistan, a gesture that would encourage the Americans to start debating their own supposed crimes and errors again, instead of responding to the Soviet threat, would be an immense propaganda success for Moscow.

This no doubt explains why the plan for international hearings into America's past role in Iran has attracted the support of such people as the CIA defector Philip Agee, whose contacts with the Iranian students finally persuaded Washington to revoke his United States passport.

## KHOMEINI AND THE KGB

ONE OF the more bizarre efforts to explain what is going on in Iran was a recent report that Ayatollah Khomeini has been working for the Soviet secret service since the early 1950s as the key agent in a deep-laid plot to manipulate the Shia movement in Iran in accordance with Moscow's interests.

The claim was made by lawyers acting for Col. Michael Goleniewski, formerly a senior officer of the First Department of the Polish intelligence service (UB), who defected to the United States by way of West Berlin in 1960. Since 1958 he had anonymously supplied the Americans with much valuable

Sceptical at first about the authenticity of the unknown letter-writer, the CIA was soon convinced that he had access to some of the most important secrets of the KGB as well as the UB. After his defection it was learned that he had not only been a UB officer but one of a group of highly trusted KGB agents inside the Polish service, enjoying the full confidence of the Soviet spymasters.

Thanks to the information Goleniewski gleaned on KGB penetration of Western intelligence, George Blake, a Soviet mole in Britain's SIS, was exposed and arrested. So were Harry Houghton, a Soviet agent in the Navy establishment at Portland, and his mistress and KGB handler, the illegal Gordon Lonsdale.

Goleniewski's past contribution to Western security is not in doubt, but within a few months of his defection his American case officers note a weird psychological change.

One day he calmly announced to the CIA that he was the Tsarevich Alexey—and although he is about 20 years too young to have been at Ekaterinburg with his "father," Nicholas II, he has gone on making the claim ever since—including, it would seem, in the new book of memoirs for which his lawyers are evidently trying to drum up publicity.

The notion that Khomeini has been working in secret for the KGB for more than two decades is, I believe, wholly incredible, as are the allegations (again from Goleniewski's lawyers) that his handler was an Iraqi Minister employed by the Soviet secret service.